

*Village of Fall Creek*  
*Minutes of Public Safety Committee Meeting*  
*July 17, 2019*

1. **Call to Order:** 6:00 p.m., Village Hall Meeting Room, 122 E. Lincoln Ave., Fall Creek
2. **Roll Call:** Members Present: Chairman Bob Jenkins, Matt Mattoon, Tim Raap. Members Absent: None. Staff Present: Police Chief Chad Dachel, Deputy Clerk Joan Drehmel. Also Present: Village President Chester Goodman, Trustees Joyce Aldrich, Karen Strasburg, Dane Zook, Village Attorney Chris Geirhart, and 10 citizens.
3. **Certify Open Meeting Law Requirements Have Been Met:** A notice of the meeting and an agenda was posted in the three public places and local newspapers were notified.
4. **Adopt Agenda:**
  - MOTION (Mattoon/Raap) to adopt the agenda as printed. PASSED, without negative vote.
5. **Community Input Session Regarding Creek Properties, 124 N Liberty St.:** Neighboring property owners voiced their concerns and complaints:
  - 131 N State Street (Bryan & Sheena Kaatz) Employees are not managing the home as residents are roaming the streets and being chased by staff, police are there most nights, sometimes several times a night. They and their 2 small children cannot enjoy their backyard which abuts the property because of the noise (foul language, fireworks, loud vehicles late at night) and the safety issues. When they have reached out to the managers there has been no response. No other property owner or tenant in the Village would be allowed to continue disturbing the peace or endangering lives without consequence.
  - 121 W Garfield Avenue (Bob & Lisa Jenkins) The employees are not properly trained to control the situation and there is a lot of employee turn-over. Management does not respond to complaints. The loud, foul language at all hours of the night, disruptive noises and violent behavior has destroyed the peaceful neighborhood and created a public safety issue.
  - 129 W Garfield Avenue (David Jacobs) Run-aways are a concern and upsetting when they run into yards. There is late-night noise from the employees when they arrive. Employees don't seem to be managing the residents, so the residents are not receiving the help they need. Fireworks were lit off on July 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 p.m. When David complained to the manager, he came over and swore at his wife.
  - 216 W Garfield Avenue (Amy Jo Fiore) Fireworks were lit off in 2017 late at night. She is not comfortable with her children walking past the property.
  - 121 N State Street (Bob & Ann Quast) The employees use loud, foul language when dealing with the residents, exhibiting a lack of concern for their care.
6. **Discuss Situation with Frequent Calls Requesting Police Assistance at Group Home:** Police Chief Dachel noted the police department was contacted by Brown Living in 2016 about coverage for this facility (which had been remodeled to house 12 residents) stating the residents would be high-risk and could be violent. The calls for assistance have increased dramatically, and Eau Claire County Sheriff's Department has complained due to their increased involvement in this situation. There is another group home in the village, but in 2017 the department was called there 30 times as compared to 58 times to this facility. The police department has spent many nights searching for "elopers" (residents that leave the facility without permission) which should be the job of the employees. Time chasing after these individuals takes the officer away from other calls that come to the office and could pose a potential safety concern for the entire village. Because of the frequency of these events, the department's policy is to respond to the call only if the individual that has left the

facility is engaged in some type of criminal or disorderly conduct.

Chief Dachel will be meeting with the regional manager of the group home to discuss the problem. An informational meeting (not a committee meeting) on August 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. was scheduled for the neighboring property owners to attend for an update on that discussion.

Village Attorney Chris Geirhart advised the citizens to submit all incidents to the police department (written statements, photos, or videos) to support the complaint against the facility. The Village Board could make a motion to assemble evidence and submit a complaint to the State of Wisconsin Department of Human Services which oversees the licensing of the facility.

Attorney Geirhart also commented on State Statute 62.23(7)(i)(9) which provides for the ability for the Village Board to conduct a quasi-trial to determine if the facility is threatening the public's health, safety and welfare. He cautioned there is no case law or guidance for this section, no other municipality has pursued it, and it could potentially put the Village in violation of federal discrimination laws.

Chairman Jenkins noted the Village does not want to discriminate against anyone but wants to ensure the safety of all its citizens. He reminded the public to attend monthly village board meetings to bring up concerns during "Citizen Input".

**7. Adjourn:**

- MOTION (Raap/Mattoon) @ 7:01 p.m. PASSED, without negative vote.

Joan Drehmel, Deputy Clerk